

A U.S. soldier on patrol in Grenada encounters one of those unique situations typical of low-intensity conflict.



# Training a Divisional Cavalry Squadron for Operations Other Than War (OOTW)

by Captain John A. Nagl and Captain Tim Huening

*"For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."*

-Sun Tzu

## Operations Other Than War Is Here Now

Field Manual 7-98, *Operations in a Low-Intensity Conflict*, opens with the Sun Tzu quote above. It then dryly continues, "The possibility of U.S. troops becoming involved in a low-intensity conflict (LIC) is ever increasing." The thousands of American soldiers currently deployed to Haiti, Turkey, Macedonia, and countless other "hot spots" around the globe would tell the author of 7-98 that the possibility is a reality. Thousands more, deploying to the former Yugoslavia to enforce the peace treaty recently signed in Paris, will face that "possibility" every day.

The end of the Cold War, and of the "balance of terror" with which the superpowers kept national ambitions and ethnic rivalries in check for fear of escalating a local conflict into global war, has completely changed the international security equation. Soldiers who spent their careers training to fight conventional war in Europe, and deployed to fight a conventional war in South-

west Asia, now face the near-certainty that their next real-world deployment will involve something less than all-out ground combat. The low-intensity conflict which American forces will face will be characterized by "the indirect versus direct application of force," according to FM 7-98. The new situations which American combat forces will face "present a unique challenge." However, "a disciplined unit, with soldiers proficient at individual skills who are operating under a clear expression of the commander's intent, can perform successfully at the tactical level in this environment."

Properly trained, equipped, and organized, American combat forces can accomplish national military objectives in any level of conflict, as our recent successes in Haiti and our continuing success in Macedonia demonstrates. However, the "increasing possibility" of low-intensity conflict necessitates certain changes in our training and organization in order to provide our forces with the best possible chance of success.

## USAREUR, the CMTC, and OOTW

The Combat Maneuver Training Center at Hohenfels is in the forefront of U.S. Army Training for Operations

Other Than War. A ten-day rotation for a tank or mechanized infantry battalion begins with three days of pure joy: training for Operations Other Than War through the creation and enforcement of a Zone of Separation between two ethnic groups that have recently signed a peace agreement ending a civil war. The Blueforce unit is required to establish a lodgment area, operate checkpoints regulating passage through the Zone of Separation, escort and protect humanitarian relief convoys, negotiate hostile checkpoints, deal with accredited and unaccredited media, establish and run civil-military working groups, and in general deal with many of the situations which units can be expected to perform successfully in real-world deployments. This training is exceptionally difficult, putting severe strain on command and control systems and on junior leader initiative and understanding of the political situation and the commander's intent. The purpose of this article is not to detail exactly how excruciating this training at the CMTC is, although the authors would like all tank company commanders in CONUS to spend six hours attempting to negotiate passage of a UN convoy through one of the belligerents' checkpoints before telling him how much more challenging an NTC rotation is. "Gunner, HEAT, checkpoint" is not the approved solution.

Training for OOTW at CMTC is so challenging — and such a realistic portrayal of what units can expect to face when deployed on peacekeeping operations or other LIC missions — that the 1st Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry has developed an Operations Other Than War Tactical Standard Operating Procedure (“OOTW TACSOP”) and a challenging OOTW training scenario which has been incorporated into gunnery Table XII. Both the OOTW TACSOP and the Cavalry Table XII scenario are constantly being revised and updated based on the results of training at Grafenwohr, the CMTC, and at home station; however, we feel that the lessons we have learned in training for Operations Other Than War may be of benefit to other Army units facing the “increasing possibility” that they may deploy into a LIC environment.

### 1-1 Cavalry OOTW TACSOP

The OOTW TACSOP builds on the tactics, techniques, and procedures found in FM 7-98 and other sources of Army doctrine. It is a derivative document; its value rests in its small size and easy reference for the proper accomplishment of the critical OOTW tasks identified by the commanders of V Corps, the 1st Armored Division, the 3rd Infantry Division, and the 7th Army Training Command. The OOTW TACSOP thus provides task, condition, and standard for the following critical tasks:

- Conduct Patrols
- Establish and Operate an Observation Post
- Establish and Operate a Checkpoint
- Plan for Media
- Conduct Liaison/Negotiate
- Escort a Convoy
- React to Ambush
- React to Indirect Fire
- Establish a Lodgment Area
- Secure a Route
- Mine Clearance
- Provide Command and Control

Many of these tasks are inherent in all military operations; in OOTW, they are accomplished by squad leaders and tank commanders. The OOTW TACSOP provides these junior leaders with a ready reference for both training and real-world performance of the critical tasks which will determine success or failure of our next deployment to a LIC environment. The TACSOP includes

detailed checklists and OPORDS for such tasks as convoy linkup, inspection procedures, LIC rules of engagement, and weapons control status, which are not often trained in most units. It has been issued to every tank and BFV commander in the squadron, and has proven to be an invaluable document.

### Cavalry Table XII: Training for OOTW

The OOTW TACSOP was the base document used to create the observer/controller checklists and tasks/conditions/standards which 1-1 Cavalry trains its platoons on as Day 1 of a two-day Cavalry Table XII scenario. Borrowing heavily from the CMTC, 1-1 Cavalry creates a Zone of Separation in the vicinity of Grafenwohr's Range 301 CALFEX training area. Tank and scout platoons are trained and evaluated on their performance of all of the OOTW critical tasks listed above. The squadron uses its Lighthorse Humvee Scout Platoon as dedicated OPFOR to replicate the warring ethnic factions, presenting a number of challenging OOTW scenarios to the platoon leaders and section sergeants who would face them in an actual deployment. It is an intensive exercise in leadership, command and control, and discipline; none of the evaluated platoon members are sorry to hear that the peace agreement has broken down as a result of continued Sovenian aggression, requiring the platoons to move to high-intensity conflict on Range 301 to restore the peace.

### OOTW at Home Station

As in all training, the most important lessons learned at Cavalry Table XII are brought out at the AAR. These lessons — incorporating changes to the OOTW TACSOP, to the organization and evaluation of Cavalry Table XII, and to internal platoon command and control, organization, and equipment — are further trained and refined at home station. OOTW is the ultimate in Sergeant's Time training: METL-focused and trained at the lowest level of supervision, just as the OOTW tasks would be performed on actual deployments. The TACSOP is a great reference for section leaders planning training, given that it is built around the tasks, conditions, and standards for tasks designated as critical to the suc-

cess of the unit in OOTW by the V Corps commander.

Operations Other Than War are increasingly likely to be the situations which American units face when deployed in harm's way. Disciplined units composed of soldiers who are proficient in their basic skills and are operating under a clear expression of the commander's intent can succeed in a low-intensity conflict environment. However, it is our duty as leaders to ensure that they have the best possible training, organization, and equipment to ensure their success. The OOTW TACSOP and training in OOTW tasks, at training centers, during gunnery, and at home station, are ways to give our soldiers the edge they deserve so that they do not have to fight and win one hundred battles, but can subdue the enemy without fighting at all.

*Copies of the 1st Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry TACSOP and the Cavalry Table XII packet are available from the Squadron S3, 1st Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry, CMR 401, APO AE 09076.*

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